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building, unless, as in some of our theatrical speculations, it has been arranged with an idea to its ultimate conversion into a church—its present business failing. It certainly does not look like a banking-house; and a puzzled stranger standing in front of it, as it is now, without sign, would range its uses somewhere between a synagogue and a States prison. With a design approaching those classic models which were lighted from above, it yet has mean side-windows. With a front of almost Egyptian heaviness, containing marble enough to make a fort, it is yet constructed in the rear with thin, scarcely wind-defying brick walls. It should be called a temple of Sham. Mammon, perhaps, after all, deserves no better.

It seems to us but a fair example of that vulgar rage for mere show and lavish expense which characterizes the architecture of our day. The front is a mere imposition. It is full of false balconies, and similar shams. Its ornamentation is profanely redundant, and overloads what, if more simple, might be even beautiful. As it is, one is called upon to admire the masons' work, which is truly admirable. The marble is beautifully white, and nicely cut; and to the unthinking eye it will be all that is required. To such eyes, we presume, it is solely addressed, and we presume our observation of it will be regarded as impertinent.

If strictly planned for a savings' bank, we think it should not have been loaded with the costly work, and by its extravagance repudiate the principle it is built to encourage; and any one who has been obliged to wait at the doors of such institutions for hours, will not admire the two small doors and the scant light of the interior. It is time that the rights of human nature as to ingress and egress from public buildings should begin to be recognized.

This building is an admirable illustration of the ignorance of the moral significance of an architectural work. There is no standard of criticism other than the recognition of the purpose of a building, with a strict conformity of structure to the thought its purpose excites, which will have any effect in eradicating our architectural errors.

“THE ART OF EGYPT was not imitative, but conventional and representative. The occupation of the Egyptian artist was hereditary, and all the forms, proportions, and attitudes of his figures were prescribed and inviolable.”—*Wornum.*

LOVE IN LITTLE.

(From the German of Rückert.) BY A. M.

I.

THIS whole world is far too spacious
For one earthly soul's embrace,
Only in the Father's bosom
Finds it an abiding-place.
Human heart is quite too small
For its love to mantle all.

II.

Then, with earnest soul and single,
To a breast that's true and free,
Trusting all and all confiding,
Yield thyself exclusively:
In the love which holds one heart,
All the world shall take a part.

Scribbling.

THE FAMILY AS A WORK OF ART.

No. II.

Si autem acceperis uxorem; non peccasti. Et si nupserit virgo, non peccavit; tribulationem tamen carnis habebunt hujusmodi. Ego autem vobis parco.—*1st Corinthians, viii. 28.*

HAPPY has it been for the growing condition of society, that the laws of the affections have always been paramount wherever and whenever nature has been sufficiently vigorous to assert its prerogatives, and to maintain a just equilibrium between itself and the mechanically stationary, and retrogressive state of things around it. Order in the phenomena of life has been, and is, but too often sought for, at the ruinous expense of its progressive vitality; and this vicious course has frequently resulted in great political and social convulsions. Family perturbations being on a small scale, and but seldom visible to the public eye, their deep under currents are never publicly felt or regarded until they undermine the foundation of the social edifice, and force an outlet through its most sacred portals. It is then that thoughtful minds are provoked to think of the importance of the family to society, through their action and reaction on each other, to investigate into its nature and workings, and the necessity of recasting its constituents so as to keep them in harmony with the principles of its sacramental foundation.

The laws of the affections in the formation of conjugal unions have always waged a deadly war against the conventional barriers, prejudices, and distinctions of race, religion, and nationality,—three directions in which the human mind has rather oscillated, irritably, than progressed harmoniously, notwithstanding their important services in the crystallisation of social existences. It would be difficult even at this day to measure the innumerable and manifold chords of discord which they keep constantly vibrating throughout family and social life, and to what an extent they poison and embitter the holiest relationships growing out of the union of human beings in society. Imperfect, and mechanically formed creatures, early cast in their iron moulds, live on, torn from the great brotherhood of humanity, and as utterly incapable of becoming artistically interwoven into the great chain of social progression as sands on the sea-shore. But those who are born into the world with affluent natures, with original powers of growth, are moved forward by the laws of their affections, and elevate themselves socially, vindicate their æsthetical aspirations without any reference to the conventional distinctions of race, religion, or nationality, and thus secure the advancing tendencies of their natures as they flood themselves into the great and symmetrically formed reservoirs of society.

Life before marriage, is to a great extent, an individualized latitudinarianism of the feelings, thoughts, and actions, even where an enlightened and religiously well-tempered parental authority has been austere brought to bear on them during their early growth. But where there has been no normal union of the parental authority in the discipline of children, there is no proper and legitimate prepara-

tion for married life, no natural and logical concatenation of the thoughts, sentiments, and actions to form a true conjugal relationship and union. It is thus that the neglect of primitive culture in the family training of children—and great defects of temper and education in the parental hierarchy, may, and do, perpetuate for ages, the most deplorable evils in all the ramifications of our expanded existences. It requires a powerful renovation of the blood, a complete physiological regeneration of our constitution to overcome and redeem those transmitted evils of the family compact which grow like weeds from age to age, and which poisonously intertwist themselves with the complicated scaffoldings of our varied existence.

For every vocation in life there is required an educated or empirical training, which is looked upon as a necessary and indispensable condition thereto; but for marriage, the most vital of all, the very source of spiritual regeneration and permanent reform, there would seem to be no probationary step deemed necessary, nor preliminary training required; all is left to chance, all lies within the dark embraces of unreasoning, unreflecting superstition. The moral, and the immoral; the educated, and the uneducated; the lettered, and the unlettered; the squalid poor, and the voluptuous rich,—all equally enter into the canonization of married life without being socially held responsible for the grave responsibilities which are incurred thereby. And yet marriage was spiritually instituted by Christ himself, was placed as an eternal rock between social life and death,—between the corruption of the body and the purity of the spirit,—between the mortality of the flesh and the immortality of the soul. *Quod ergo Deus coniunxit, homo non separat.* Those have drifted far away from the religious significance of marriage who identify it with any agency or attribute peculiar to polygamy, or, who imagine that it has any function in common with it. Polygamy must have been but a barely visible moral improvement on the state of things that went before it, and out of which it grew progressively; but those only who have thoroughly studied the social history of the times of polygamy, can form a sufficiently elevated notion of the immense flight of spirit over matter which sanctified the advent of the Christian marriage upon the libidinous ruins of pagan polygamy.

The eternally working elements of nature are slow in effecting reforms,—slow in breaking the carnally formed shell that coils itself around and impedes the perpetually moving spirit that renovates and redeems the world. It is this progressively slow movement of the spirit of Nature's laws which so often irritates the spasmodic and badly trained minds of what the world calls reformers, men of narrow but intensified intellects, thrown up by the tempestuous undercurrent of events, long-continued and active, but converging at times into a critical point, concretely marked off by these flesh and blood reformers.

Misconceptions as to the nature and destination of marriage have made it a sepulchre for many a fondly cherished hope,—many a fondly anticipated pleasure. Licentious imaginations have become jaded

in dipping it in ideal colors which have quickly faded when reflected in the healthy light of life's realities. It has but too seldom been regarded as a spiritual institution through which the lower appetites and passions of our nature have to be filtered into ancillaries for the invigoration of the divinities that inwardly move and elevate us, and through which woman must have her social equalities and moral dignities, and be no longer considered as an instrument of pleasure,—a mere *agent matériel de procréation*. Marriage must be a crucifixion to those whose physical disparities are incapable of growing into moral unities,—whose binary material conjunction is not followed by a corresponding spiritual unity of their thoughts, feelings, and actions. In our next, we shall consider the pecuniary requisites of marriage, and the necessity of true art in the formation of a home.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ITALY IN 1855-56.

Sunday, 9th March, 1856.

THE Catacombs of St. Peter's are the types of the beginning and of the end of the Church in Rome, of its early faith and suffering, and its later triumph and worldly success. There are few places more crowded with solemn and affecting associations than the catacombs, and perhaps no other in which one may so easily transfer himself in feeling to the first centuries of Christianity; and, entering into the lives of the Christians of those times, take part in their joys, their sufferings, their martyrdoms, and their support. It is an experience never to be forgotten, when one descends for the first time into those dark, narrow, under-ground passages, cut through the soft, volcanic stone, lined with grave above grave on either side. Mile after mile the labyrinth of burial-paths extends. Sometimes rising to near the level of the ground, sometimes descending to form a second or third story, one below the other, of excavated passages. Almost all the graves have been opened and rifled; the marble slabs that faced them have been broken or carried away, or the tiles with which many were closed, have been knocked down, and the interior of the little bed in the rock where the body was laid, exposed to sight. But everywhere, notwithstanding all the injury they have suffered, and the long fifteen centuries that have passed since they were made and used, everywhere are to be found indications of special facts of the most vivid reality and the most touching interest. In the plaster by which the tiles were fastened to the stone, an inscription was sometimes scratched with the point of a trowel, while the mortar was yet damp. Long ago the body mouldered, but here is the name of "Perpetua," who was buried on the 3d Kalends of June, *in Pace* (in peace). There are many graves of little children, while other graves are cut out deep and large in the rock, that two or more members of one family might be put side by side in death. On the rough plaster still remains the impression of a ring, or perhaps of a coin, with which it had been stamped, that in this hidden city

of graves this one might be recognized and found again by him who had laid his treasure away in it. Here, too, is the monogram of Christ, and here, just scratched in the plaster, the rude drawing of a palm branch, to mark that in that grave was laid one of the noble army of martyrs. His name unknown, his life unknown, his trial unknown, his grave empty; and this little memorial palm all that is left to tell us of one who died for his Lord. But this is enough. By another grave is the mark in the mortar of the glass vessel which contained the blood of another unnamed martyr. There are very many of such graves as these. The times of persecution reproduce themselves to the imagination as one stands in the dark and still passages by the side of a martyr's grave. Times, when to be a Christian meant really to be one who took up his cross to follow Christ. Times, when faith trusted in the promises of the Lord, and rejoiced to be called to suffer for his sake. Times, when faith overcame suffering, and the martyr went to death as to triumph, and they who loved him were glad for his sake. These narrow walks are once more occupied by those who bring the body of the dead in Christ to the tomb. Their lights cast strong and flickering shadows; the few who have come to lay him away walk one by one, perhaps singing together, perhaps repeating the words of comfort left them by their Master. They leave the body of him whom they may so soon have to follow in peace, and they turn away ready for the new trials and the new perils of to-morrow. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God; and he shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of water, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

In these catacombs the faithful and heroic spirit of the first martyrs still sanctifies the air. It is said sometimes that the martyr spirit is extinct or faint in our days; but such a saying proves only the faithlessness of him who utters it, and his real ignorance of the world. The bloody martyrdoms of ancient times are, let us hope, gone forever. But there are disciples of Christ called every day to trials, to bear which requires the fortitude of martyrs; but which must be borne without the consciousness of the trial, being for the glory of God and for the cause of His truth. None of the excitement of heroism, none of the earthly glory that attended the death of the martyrs, accompanies these trials which come to the most humble and obscure. To live in faith is often far more difficult than to die for faith. That persecution is the means of purifying, and that prosperity leads to worldliness in the practice and in the heart of many who call themselves Christians, no one doubts; but the early martyrs would have died in vain had they not, by their deaths, quickened the seeds of faith in the hearts of their fellow Christians, to be transmitted from one to the other, even to the latest, and to serve as one of the aids and supports of those who, in our and succeeding times, may be called on to bear heavier trials than that of a glorious and triumphant death for Christ. Let us not, while the memory

of the martyrs of the early times remains, or while one palm branch stands as their record in the Catacombs, admit that their lives and deaths were of so little worth as an example and stimulus, that the spirit which animated them has grown weak and uncertain in us.

The history of the Catacombs is to be divided into four portions. First—that of the three first centuries, when they were used as burying places, and rarely for places of concealment, and for religious meetings. In these centuries, beside the graves, some simple chapels were hollowed out of the rock in which the faithful used to meet at stated times. After the empire became nominally Christian, and peace was given to the church, the custom of using the catacombs for burial was gradually discontinued; but they were more and more visited as holy places. New and more splendid chapels were formed in them; and often over their entrance churches were erected, and connected, if possible, with the tomb of the principal saint buried below. But when Italy began to be desolated by the northern armies that poured down one after another upon it, and the country about Rome became more and more unsafe, the catacombs were neglected as places of resort. They were left to be rifled by whoever chose. Only those churches at their entrances were maintained, which could be well fortified and defended. The others were neglected, and some fell utterly to ruin, and it was only last year that the forgotten church of St. Alexander, which stood near the seventh milestone on the Nomentan way, and which had in the course of centuries been buried in its own ruins and in the slowly accumulated earth, was re-discovered, and the catacombs adjoining it once more entered. This neglect lasted, with the exception of such interest as was taken in the catacombs by a few scattered and separate individuals, down to a very late time; and it is only in recent days, that what may be called the fourth period in their history, commenced. They are now regarded with the interest that belongs to them, not merely as the burial-places of the first Christians of Rome, but as containing in their inscriptions most important illustrations of the history and doctrines of the church, and in the pictures on the walls of chapels and shrines precious and unparalleled works of early art.

During the last few years much attention has been given in Rome to all the remains of the first centuries of Christianity. Many inscriptions from the Catacombs have been arranged in a long gallery at the Vatican; and at the present time others are being collected, and arranged in the Lateran Palace, in connection with a Museum of Christian Antiquities, formed under the direction of the Pope. At the same time investigations in the Catacombs themselves are being carried on, and discoveries of the highest interest and importance have recently been made by the Cavaliere de Rossi, a man still young, but of marvellous learning and not less marvellous sagacity. The story of his discovery of the ancient entrance to the catacombs of St. Calixtus and one of the tombs of the Popes, and of St. Cecilia within it, is a piece of the very romance of Archaeology.